



For Immediate Release  
Meredith B. Imwalle  
Director of Communications  
202.624.3528  
mimwalle@sso.org  
August 9, 2004

## **NASS and the States Work to Engage Military and Overseas Voters**

**WASHINGTON, DC --** The National Association of Secretaries of State has added a military and overseas voters' page to its Web site as part of its continued efforts to engage the more than one million U.S. troops on active duty and other U.S. civilians overseas. NASS member states and territories will include similar information on their Web sites.

NASS is also working with the Defense Department and U.S. Postal Service to implement a plan, which the association helped develop, for expedited ballot transport. NASS met with the U.S. Election Assistance Commission last week to discuss a method for reporting how many of these ballots are requested, cast and counted.

"NASS has resolved to make outreach to military and overseas voters a priority this election year," said NASS President and New Mexico Secretary of State Rebecca Vigil-Giron. "We'll work to ensure they have free and fair access to elections, just as we work to ensure that all Americans are included in this democratic process."

In addition to updating their Web sites, the states are focusing on what they can do now to expedite delivery and receipt of military and overseas voters' ballots. The results of a recent NASS survey show that an overwhelming majority of states accept ballot requests via fax or email, in addition to regular and express mail. Most states said they would also accept ballots returned via fax or express mail.

"And there are safeguards in place to ensure these voters are able to cast their ballots in time to be counted," said Vigil-Giron. "Anyone who requests a ballot from their home state and doesn't receive it may use a Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot."

The Federal Post Card Application registration form is available online and from federal voting assistance officers trained by the Defense Department's Federal Voting Assistance Program and stationed in military units and around the world. The states worked with the Federal Voting Assistance Program and the U.S. Postal Service to make these federal ballots easily-recognizable by post offices and election offices.

NASS will include the Defense Department in its upcoming National Voter Registration Week, September 13-19. The association will support DOD's push to get military and overseas voters to cast their ballots no later than October 11-15.

###